

SEROND YEAR OF CONFLICT.

END OF TWENTY-FOUR MONTHS OF WORLD COMBAT.

Chronicles of Past Twelvemonth Show Bloody Fighting With No Decisive Results.

The second year of the world war closes with the "Battle of Europe," a concerted effort of the allies on three fronts to crush the central powers, which has developed into a titanic struggle before which superlatives, already exhausted, are completely beggared.

France and Great Britain in the west, Russia in the east, Italy in the south are hurling wave after wave of armed men on the Teutonic lines, together with an avalanche of shells and bombs such as the world has not known up to the present time. For the first time the Teutons are, temporarily at least, on the defensive on the thousands of miles of the existing battle fronts.

The change in the situation which the year has brought is striking, although the results so far have been more potential and spectacular than radical. A year ago the Germans, continuing their great drive against the Russians, hurled the Slavs back along the entire Eastern front, captured Warsaw, the great fortresses of Kovno, Novogeorgievsk and Brest-Litovsk and established lines far inside Russian territory which they maintained virtually unbroken until within the last three months. They seized all Poland, a great slice of Russia to the south of that country and expelled the invaders from Galicia and Bukovina. Field Marshals von Hindenburg and von Mackensen were the heroes of these great successes.

Three Big Battles.

On the western front the changes in position during the year were comparatively small but the twelve months were marked by three events of interest: The battles of Champagne and Verdun and the opening of the great Franco-British offensive on the Somme took place in this period.

The battle of Champagne opened on September 25, after a week's terrible bombardment of the German lines by the French, British and Belgians. In a week of the bloodiest fighting that had been known up to that time the allies announced that they had taken 20 miles of trenches, six towns and 23,000 prisoners. But there they halted. They could not break through the mighty German wall and the grim deadlock which marked the western front for so many months was resumed. The battle of Champagne marked the removal of Sir John French, the British commander-in-chief, from the beginning of the war up to that time. In December, 1915, it was announced that he had resigned to take a home command and Sir Douglas Haig was appointed his successor.

In sheer human interest the battle of Verdun probably surpassed all other individual events of the war. On February 23 the German crown prince began his assault of the historic French fortress, known throughout many centuries as the gateway to France. For five months the defenders withstood a storm at the fury of which the world stood aghast. Foot by foot, almost inch by inch, the Germans forged forward, with a reckless disregard of their lives, a tenacity and cool courage which was only equalled by the heroic determination of the French. On June 3 an unofficial estimate of the German losses at Verdun placed the total at the appalling figure of 450,000. The assailants fought their way to within about three and a half miles of the fortress, but for several weeks have reported no further progress and the force of their attacks appears to have lessened.

The Allies' Countersnake.

The Franco-British offensive on the Somme opened on July 1, 1916. It was preceded by a bombardment of unparalleled duration and intensity, featured by the appearance of new and gigantic British howitzers. Under this awful hurricane of big gun fire the German first line defenses crumbled. When the British and French troops advanced they reported that they found trenches in which there was not a single survivor, only the dead guarding the silent rifles and machine guns. German first lines were carried over an extent of 25 miles and the second positions pierced at certain points, but up to the present the fighting has been indecisive insofar as the forcing of the Germans to withdraw their main lines is concerned. The fighting has been of the bitterest possible description and the reports of press correspondents at the front team with accounts of the most amazing heroism and devotion on both sides. Instances have been recorded of the sole survivor of a company, wounded and without hope, who manned a machine gun and fought to the last amid the bodies of

his comrades; of isolated detachments who stood off their foes for days until succor reached them or death; of captured surgeons who bound up the wounds of their captors; of heroic rescues of wounded comrades under fire and of countless similar deeds that thrilled the watching world.

The first move in the great allied offensive was not made by the Franco-British, however, but by the Russians. On June 4 the troops of Emperor Nicholas opened a tremendous assault on the Austro-German lines on a 300 mile front extending from the Pripiet marshes to Roumania. The Teuton lines held firm in the north, but to the south Gen. Brusiloff swept with irresistible force through the Austrian defenses, tearing a great gap about 100 miles in extent. Through this the Russians poured, capturing Czernowitz, the capital of Bukovina, and overrunning the crown land. The Austrian losses are declared to have been enormous, a month after the offensive began the Russians making an official announcement that over 200,000 prisoners had been taken and at least an equal number killed or wounded.

Battle for Lemberg.

As the offensive developed the Russians won new successes further north and at the close of the war year are engaged in a mighty struggle for Lemberg, the capital of Galicia. The fighting has also extended to the extreme north, in the Riga-Dvinsk region, but here the Germans have held their own and no decisive result has as yet been gained by either side.

In another theatre of the war the year was marked by other and important Russian successes. Following the disasters on the eastern front in the closing months of 1915 the Grand Duke Nicholas was removed as commander-in-chief of the Russian armies and sent to take charge of the operations against the Turks in the Caucasus. After months of preparation he began a great drive across Armenia in January, 1916, which resulted in the capture of Erzerum and the port of Trebizond and expelled the Turks from the greater part of Armenia. After a comparative lull of some months the grand duke resumed his advance simultaneously with a serious uprising against the Turks by the Arabs in Arabia. The Arabs took the sacred city of Mecca, Jiddah and Taif and besieged Medina, the city where Mohammed was buried and one of the holiest spots of the Mohammedan world. In the meantime the Russians took Mamakhatun and Baiburt, but these operations have not yet reached a definite conclusion.

In connection with the Turkish campaign the year saw a serious reverse for the Franco-British arms and a less important but highly dramatic disaster for the British. The disastrous attempt of the French and British to force the Dardanelles and seize Constantinople was definitely abandoned in November, 1915, and the allied troops withdrawn from the Gallipoli peninsula. About 150,000 troops had been used in this venture, supported by a mighty fleet. Six battleships, five British and one French, were sent to the bottom as well as some minor craft and the casualties were unofficially reported to be almost equal to the original number of the expeditionary force. This was the result of six months of some of the most sanguinary fighting of the war.

The Capture of Townshend.

The second disaster of the British was the surrender of 10,000 troops under Gen. Townshend to the Turks at Kut-el-Amara on the Tigris. This expedition had made a sensational dash more than 300 miles up the river in an attempt to seize Bagdad. It was within ten miles of the city when it was decisively defeated by the Turks and forced to fall back 100 miles. Here it was surrounded and forced to surrender after a relief force had made several vain efforts at rescue.

Two new nations entered the ranks of the belligerents during the year. On October 13, 1915, Bulgaria threw in her lot with the central powers and on March 9, 1916, Germany declared war on Portugal after the republic had seized all German ships interned in her ports.

The entrance of Bulgaria into the arena was signaled by a combined assault on Serbia by Austria, Germany and Bulgaria, which resulted in the complete overwhelming of the hopelessly outnumbered Serbians and the subjugation of their country. The remnants of the Serbian army were driven across the frontier into the wilderness of Albania whence they were rescued by the British, French and Italians. They were shipped to Corfu, where they were reorganized and reequipped and later, to the number of about 100,000, joined the Franco-British forces at Saloniki. The survivors of the Gallipoli campaign were also gathered at the Grecian seaport as well as a large British army from Egypt. This combined force is estimated at 600,

000 men and is presumably being held for an attempt to wrest Serbia from the Bulgarians.

The Italian Seesaw.

The principal success won by Austrian arms during the year was a great offensive undertaken against Italy in May. The Austrian forces swept the Italian invaders back over a wide stretch of country in the southern Tyrol, reconquered about 270 square miles of Austrian territory and carried the battle into Italy. The Italians rallied, however, and at the close of the 12 months had regained a large portion of ground and were vigorously pressing a counter-offensive in accordance with the plans of the entente for concerted action.

On the sea the year witnessed an event of surpassing interest. The German grand fleet, steaming out from its mine fields and impregnable harbors of Kiel and Wilhelmshaven, engaged the British fleet in the mightiest naval battle of history.

The battle was fought off the coast of Jutland on May 31. Its results are so obscured by the conflicting claims of the combatants that they will probably not be definitely known until the war is over, if then. The Germans assert that the British losses were far heavier than theirs and on that ground claim the victory. The British, denying greater losses, point to the fact that they still control the seas as the basis of their right to the title of victors. London also claims that since the battle 200 British ships, which had been tied up in Baltic ports since the beginning of the war, have been able to make their way to English ports unmolested by German warships.

The German official account of the fight says that the British losses were 117,150 tons as against 60,720 tons sunk by the British. The British admiralty makes no attempt to estimate the loss in tonnage, but unofficial British estimates place the German loss at 109,220 tons against 112,350 for the British. Officially the Germans have admitted the loss of only one capital ship, the Lutzow, 26,600 tons, a battlecruiser surpassing in tonnage and armament many battleships. The British claim to have sunk in addition two dreadnoughts and probably a third. The principal losses admitted by them for their side are the three battlecruisers, the Invincible, the Indefatigable and the Queen Mary.

Great Kitcheners Lost.

One other event on the sea aroused intense interest. On June 5 Field Marshal Earl Kitcheners, Great Britain's famous minister of war, was drowned with his staff off the Orkneys when the cruiser Hampshire went down. It was at first thought the cruiser had been the victim of a submarine but this theory was generally discarded when it was learned that the warship had struck a mine and gone down in the midst of a terrific storm.

The second year of the war was a memorable one as far as the United States was concerned. It marked the apparent final passing of the crisis between this country and Germany over the submarine warfare which threatened more than once a rupture of relations and even war. The sinking by a submarine without warning of the White Star liner Arabic, with the loss of two American lives, created a profound impression in the United States. Germany sent a note to Washington in September pleading self-defense and offering to refer the question of compensation to The Hague but this was regarded with disappointment by the Washington government and the situation became very tense. In October Germany disavowed and regretted the sinking of the Arabic.

Five months later the French steamship Sussex was torpedoed without warning while carrying more than 300 passengers, including a number of Americans, across the English channel. About 50 persons were killed and this incident brought the submarine situation to an acute stage. Germany at first disclaimed responsibility for the attack on the Sussex but the evidence accumulated by the United States appeared so overwhelming that President Wilson on April 18 dispatched to Germany a note which was virtually an ultimatum, and on the following day personally appeared before congress and laid the entire problem before that body. On May 10 Germany admitted the submarine attack on the Sussex and promised that no more liners or merchantmen would be sunk without warning and without ample opportunity for the escape of crews and passengers. These promises were considered satisfactory by the president and the war cloud lifted. Since that time a large number of ships have been sunk by German and Austrian submarines but the rules of international law have been generally observed.

The Going of Dumba.

Another cause of friction between the United States and the central powers was also removed during the year. Since the outbreak of the war certain propagandists had been busy

instigating strikes in munition factories which had contracts with the allies and in endeavoring in other ways to interfere with this trade. For his activity in this respect the recall of Dr. Constantin Dumba, Austrian ambassador, was requested by President Wilson in September. The following December, for similar reasons, the president requested the recall of Capt. Boy-Ed and Capt. von Papen, naval and military attaches respectively to the German embassy. A number of convictions were obtained in the criminal courts in other cases and the propaganda ceased.

Apart from events in the actual war theatres the most striking event of the year in connection with the conflict was an uprising in Ireland in April. The outbreak was organized by a society known as the Sinn Fein, committed to the principle of an independent Ireland. Bloody fighting took place in Dublin in which hundreds of lives were lost and the heart of the business section destroyed, at a cost of many millions of dollars. The fighting was sporadic elsewhere in the islands and of minor importance. The revolt was finally crushed and the ringleaders executed. It led, however, to an agitation which resulted in the government preparing a temporary home rule bill which it expects to pass through parliament this fall.

Just before the outbreak of the rebellion Sir Roger Casement, formerly in the British consular service, was arrested on the west coast of Ireland where he had attempted to land a cargo of arms sent from Germany. He was tried later for high treason and sentenced to death.

The Terrible Cost.

No definite figures can be given of the cost of the great war in blood and gold but the most reliable estimates present figures so vast that they become practically meaningless. In March, 1916, the United States general army staff estimated that the total losses in men to all the belligerents since the war began were 13,033,000. The exact figures for any country are unavailable.

As to the money question figures are more reliable but still vague. They present sums which are so beyond anything previously known to international finance, so impossible of any human comparison, that they become little more than a jumble of figures. In March Dr. Karl Helfferich, secretary of the imperial treasury of Germany, estimated that the war was costing all the combatants \$375,000,000 a week or \$11,500,000,000 a year. William Michaelis, another German financial expert, put the yearly cost at the vaster sum of \$15,000,000,000 and other financial authorities gave even higher figures.

On July 17 Reginald McKenna, British chancellor of the exchequer, stated in the house of commons that the expenditures for Great Britain alone were \$30,000,000 daily. He did not say, however, how much of this incredible sum represented war expenses.

Within the last few months there has been some talk of peace in Germany and considerable peace activity by unofficial bodies in various countries, but there has been little indication that the chancelleries of Europe are at present seriously considering a close of hostilities.

BYRNES AND BYRNS.

How Kindly Tennessean Aided South Carolina Congressman.

Representative James F. Byrnes, of South Carolina, is certain that Representative Joseph W. Byrns, of Tennessee is about the most accommodating man in congress, if not in the entire country.

You can see for yourself the similarity of the names. When Byrnes was nominated for congress in South Carolina, where the nomination on the Democratic ticket is equivalent to being elected, several hundred voters in the district assumed that Byrnes was henceforth a member and began to write to him, making all manner of requests.

All this mail went to Joe Byrns, of Tennessee. Byrns reads the papers, and soon figured out what was the matter, but did not have the heart to shove off congressional duties on a man not yet a congressman. He simply looked after the correspondence himself. If a South Carolina man wrote for a horse book or a document Byrns of Tennessee supplied it out of his own quota. The South Carolina folk passed many encomiums on the promptness with which their congressman caught on to his new official chores.

Joe Byrns used up tons of good energy looking after the correspondence of the man with the name like his before he even knew the man by sight.—Detroit Free Press.

Proved.

The Sunday-school teacher was not satisfied with Ellen's unsupported assertion that she had been christened in orthodox manner.

"How do you know you have?" she asked.

"Because I've got the marks on my arm," said Ellen.—Puck.

When Opportunity Beckons

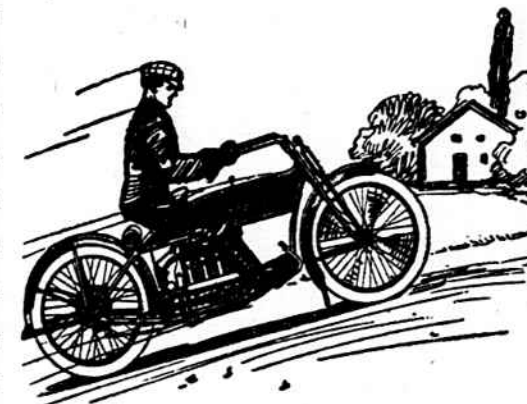
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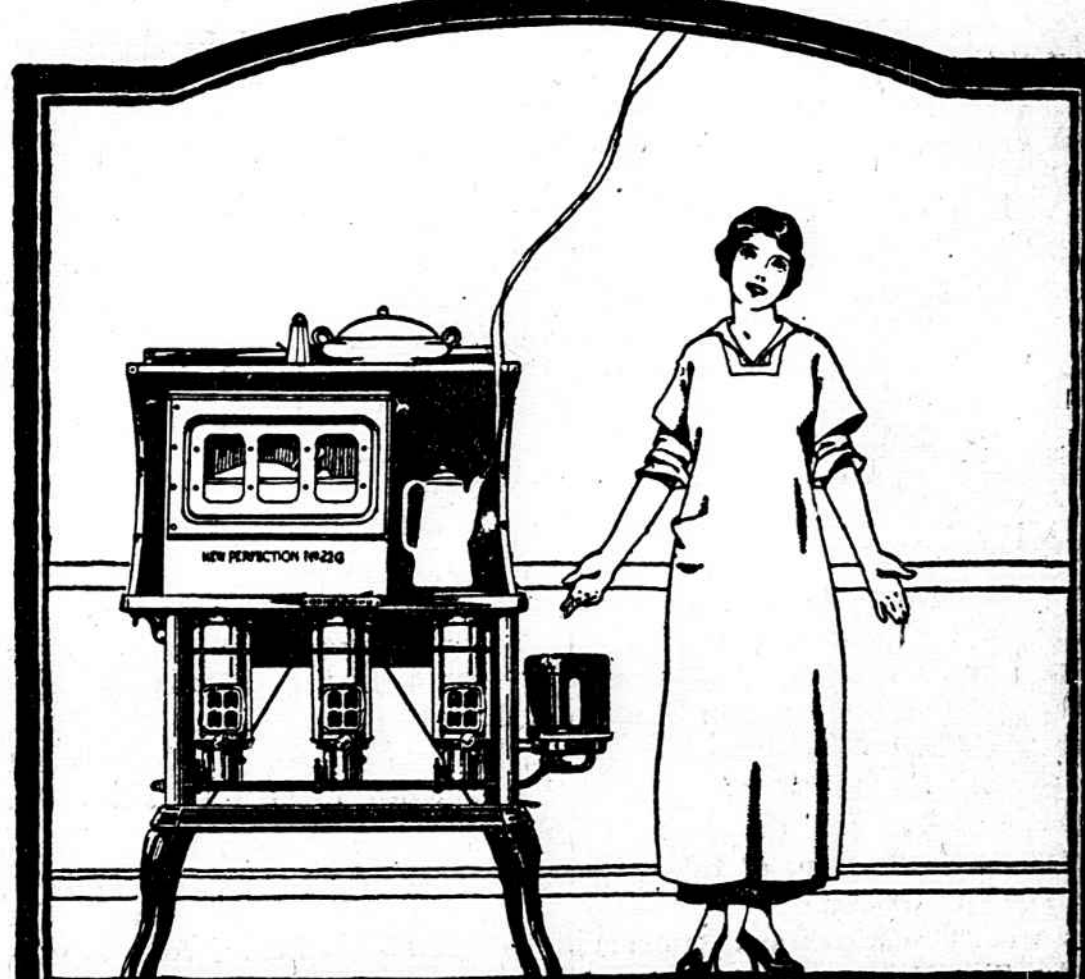
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